

30,000 were not even sure he had spoken. Yet his words continue to inspire the world and the Nation today. In 272 words is what it took for President Lincoln to explain to a war-weary nation why it must continue to fight. He called on the Nation to look up from the devastation and division of the war to a higher purpose. He redefined the meaning and the value of the continuing struggle: "that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom."

He said that the ceremony at Gettysburg was more than the consecration of a cemetery; it represented an opportunity and an obligation for us, the living, to finish the work of those who had fallen there, to ensure that "this government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

It may have been the greatest speech in American history. Yet, after President Lincoln delivered it, there was only polite applause. On his trip back to Washington, Lincoln expressed disappointment. He said of his address, "It was a flat failure. I am distressed about it. I ought to have prepared it with more care."

The Chicago Times was even less charitable. They editorialized and said:

The cheek of every American must tingle with shame as he reads the silly, flat and dishwatery utterances of the president.

Edward Everett, the famed orator and former Governor of Massachusetts who had been the main speaker at Gettysburg, was one of the first to recognize the greatness of Lincoln's words. Within days, he wrote to the President, "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion, in two hours, as you did in two minutes."

In June 1865, in his eulogy to the fallen President, the fiery abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner called the Gettysburg Address "a monumental act." He said President Lincoln had been mistaken when he predicted that "the world will little note, nor long remember what we say here." The truth, Senator Sumner said, is that "[t]he world noted at once what he said, and will never cease to remember it. The battle itself was less important than the speech."

President Lincoln did not live to see his legacy: a United States of America that has endured, a nation so far removed from the hated institution of legalized human slavery that today President Lincoln's old office in the White House is occupied by our first African-American President.

As we commemorate today the 200th birthday of the man whose leadership saved our Union, saved our Nation and created a new birth of freedom, let us pledge that we too will dedicate ourselves to preserving his legacy and continuing the still-unfinished work for America.

I yield the floor.

COMMENDING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about today's guest Chaplain, Reverend Marshal Ausberry of Antioch Baptist Church, located in Fairfax Station, VA. I am pleased to welcome Dr. Ausberry to the U.S. Senate today.

Dr. Ausberry holds a master of divinity degree from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University and a doctorate of ministry degree in preaching at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He and his wife Robyn have been married for nearly 30 years, and have three children: Marshal Jr., Rian, and Mycah.

Antioch Baptist Church was founded in January 1989, and in its 20th year continues to bring its mission and ministry to the greater DC metro area. Since 1995, Dr. Ausberry has led this vibrant and robust congregation, expanding not only their membership, but their outreach and community involvement as well.

Through the dozens of missions and ministries at Antioch, Dr. Ausberry has made a profound impact on the lives of many members of not only my constituency but those throughout the DC metro area. I am certain that he will continue to guide his congregation for many years to come, and I look forward to seeing the direction of Antioch Baptist Church under his leadership.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of New Mexico). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Vermont.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I wish to state my strong support of the economic recovery plan because the American people and their communities need it to create jobs, to stabilize the economy, and to protect those who have been most hurt by the current global economic and financial crises.

Many Americans, especially my fellow Vermonters who have watched this process, look at the resistance the eco-

nomic recovery plan has met from many on the other side of the aisle, and they are somewhat dispirited. They remember how readily Congress rubberstamped hundreds of billions of dollars the previous administration earmarked for Iraq. Now they see how difficult it has been to get bipartisan approval for investments here at home that are desperately needed to jump start an economy that is in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

I call on fellow Senators—who were willing and eager to vote for billions of dollars to rebuild the infrastructure of Iraq, who were willing to vote for billions of dollars to create jobs in Iraq, who were willing to vote for billions of dollars to help law enforcement in Iraq—to focus on the needs we have here at home. Let's spend some of that money in America to repair our infrastructure, to create jobs in America, and to help law enforcement in America.

No one disputes the clear fact that we are confronting the most severe economic problem we have had in generations. The U.S. economy has been in recession since December 2007. America's GDP declined 3.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008, the steepest drop since 1982. The United States lost 2.6 million jobs last year, the most since 1945. Last week we learned the U.S. economy shed almost 600,000 jobs in January, putting the unemployment rate at 7.6 percent.

In Vermont, not only has the amount of credit available to small businesses shrunk significantly, but our unemployment rate jumped to 6.4 percent in December. That is the highest it has been in 15 years. Vermont is not alone in this struggle. Workers, businesses, State and local governments all across the country face mounting debt, slumping orders, and sagging budgets.

To respond to this extraordinary crisis, I agree with President Obama and the vast majority of Americans that we have to act quickly and responsibly to pass an economic recovery and job creation plan as bold as the challenges we face. Americans want jobs. They want to work. They want to support their families. We have to help create those jobs. If we act now to strengthen our economy and invest in America's future, we can create good-paying jobs, we can cut taxes for working families, and we can make responsible investments in our future.

Our first priority should be to put America back to work. This economic recovery plan will help create or save over three million jobs, including an entire generation of green jobs that will make public and private investments in renewable energy and make America more energy efficient.

Investing in our country's infrastructure and education will do more than create jobs today—it can put us on a long-term path toward prosperity. Rebuilding our roads and bridges, expanding broadband access to rural communities; making our energy grid smart

and more efficient; creating state-of-the-art classrooms and labs and libraries; and investing in job training that Americans will need to succeed in the 21st century global economy will give us tangible assets we can use for years to come to foster additional economic growth.

As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I would like to highlight that the funding for State and local law enforcement in this recovery package will not only help to address vital crime prevention needs, but it will have an immediate and positive impact on the economy, as police chiefs and experts from across the country told the Judiciary Committee in its first hearing this year. Hiring new police officers will stimulate the economy and lead to safer communities and neighborhoods.

Nobody thinks this bill is perfect. We could write 100 different perfect bills based on our own analysis. But America is hurting, and Americans urgently need our help. I believe this economic recovery package will make a timely and constructive difference across the country by creating and saving jobs, making needed infrastructure investments, reducing the tax burden on struggling families, and relieving the strain on State budget deficits.

Vermonters are watching and waiting. Working families across the country are watching and waiting. Time is running out. I will vote aye.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO MILLARD FULLER

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to pay tribute to a great American who we lost earlier this month.

Millard Fuller, the founder and former president of Habitat for Humanity, was a personal friend to me and many Members of Congress. Many of us worked closely with Millard Fuller, particularly in the last 15 years of his extraordinary leadership.

I wish to take a minute today to pay tribute to Millard and his family—his wife Linda, his son Christopher, his daughters Kim, Faith and Georgia and his nine grandchildren. He has left behind these loved ones who will carry on his important work. Linda was a co-founder of Habitat for Humanity, and a driving force in the creation of this organization that has touched the lives of literally millions of people around the world.

When I think of where Millard Fuller died unexpectedly earlier this month, near the small town of Americus, GA, I cannot help but be reminded of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, one of the most inspiring documents ever written. This declaration reminds us that when we speak about human rights, we must remember that the recognition of these rights begins in small places close to home, places so

small that they can't necessarily be seen on maps. It is in these small places that people long for dignity and respect.

Sometimes in the Senate, we get carried away with grand visions of universal rights and broad, sweeping policies to protect these rights. But when you get right down to it, our visions are carried out in our own neighborhoods, in our own courthouses and in very small places like Americus, GA.

By the age of 29, Millard Fuller had made his first million dollars. He was a man with a great mind and extraordinary leadership abilities, who could have made a great fortune for his wife, his children and himself. But instead, with his wife's urging, Millard Fuller and Linda decided to take the multiple talents God had given them and refocus their lives on Christian service. They set their hearts on making a difference in the world, and the result was an organization that is one of the greatest nonprofits I have come to know.

In 1968, Millard Fuller and Linda began a Christian ministry on a farm in southwest Georgia where they built decent housing for low-income families using volunteer labor and donations. This concept was expanded into what is now Habitat for Humanity International and the Fuller Center for Housing. By 1981, Habitat had affiliates in 14 States, and was carrying out its mission to build homes with volunteer labor, ensuring that these homes were affordable to the poor and those of modest means.

Many Senators have commented privately and publicly about his extraordinary organization, and President Carter once remarked that Millard Fuller was one of the greatest talents he had ever known—serious words coming from a President. President Carter was a personal friend of Millard Fuller, and in 1984, he became a Habitat volunteer, giving his name and resources to Millard Fuller's organization. President and Mrs. Carter became the faces of Habitat for Humanity, and would attract thousands of people to volunteer during the Jimmy Carter Work Project, an annual week-long effort to build Habitat homes all over the world. By 1992, Habitat had a presence in 92 nations.

I was very fortunate to have met Millard Fuller. He was an inspiration to me and, as I have said, to many Senators. Many of us come into our young adulthood and say we want to make a difference in the world, and we all try in our various ways. Many of us never quite accomplish that. But Millard Fuller did. He had an impact on the world, and the world will remember his life and his vision. The world will remember that in this great land of wealth and opportunity, Millard Fuller thought it was shameful that people were living without decency and respect.

He said it is not what Jesus would want. It is not what the Bible teaches. It is not what those of the Christian

faith believe. He built Habitat on a simple principle that the poor are not lazy, but very industrious—that if the poor were given a chance, they could accomplish a great deal.

In order to occupy a Habitat house, the family who is going to live there gets to build the home with their neighbors, with the kind of old-fashioned, rock-ribbed community values of pitching in, building a home, and building upon that solid foundation.

Not only was it Millard Fuller's vision to give families a decent place to live, he wanted to give them something to own. Owning a home paves the way for being able to finance against the equity in that home to build a business, to send children to college, and to establish a future.

I want people to know that paying tribute to Millard Fuller is about more than just building homes. Millard Fuller's life was about building hope, building a future and literally changing the course of life—creating an upward trajectory for people around the world.

I don't believe that Millard Fuller knew what an impact he had. I only hope we will remember him often. And when we do, as leaders in the Senate and the House, as Governors, and in the White House, we will recommit ourselves to realizing the simple principles that Millard Fuller lived every day.

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the devastation that hit the gulf coast, Habitat was one of the first organizations on the ground. Millard and his wife Linda came to Louisiana and helped us to start building on higher ground. They built not just in the New Orleans area and along the gulf coast of Mississippi, but also in Shreveport, LA, where they joined with a group of local leaders to start new organizations that built homes for people in northwest Louisiana.

I would like to read one personal testimony from Cherie Ashley, who is the executive director of Habitat for Humanity in Northwest Louisiana. She and her family were beneficiaries of this work. Cherie was originally from New Orleans, but the flood waters of Katrina forced her out. She fled to Shreveport with her family. She said:

I was blessed with one of the first of the three homes that was built in Allendale, in Northwest Louisiana. Mr. Fuller was passionate about the work he did and he was passionate about eliminating poverty across this nation. The Fuller Center for Housing and Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Louisiana have provided me and my children the opportunity to regain stability and normalcy after such a life altering event—Hurricane Katrina. I am not just the Executive Director for Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Louisiana, most importantly, I am a proud Habitat homeowner, and that's what God—through Millard Fuller—did for me.

He most certainly was a man who lived up to God's calling. I believe we would do ourselves well to remember him often, to thank Linda and his family for the tremendous sacrifice they made, and to honor him by continuing his work.